(d) what steps are being taken for immediate release of sanctioned funds to avoid an imminent closure of this institution ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI KRISHNA SAHI) : (a) to (c) The Central Government provides funds for approved schemes and projects. The question of reimbursement does not arise. The budget provisions for the Asiatic Society for the year 1987-88 are Rs 59 00 lakhs (Plan) and Rs 46.38 lakhs (Non-Plan). Funds have been released in three instalments during the current financial year, totalling Rs. 25.91 lakhs under Plan and Rs. 20.72 lakhs under Non-Plan. These include funds carried forward from 1986-87 under both Heads.

Releases of funds have been made in accordance with the usual procedure on receipt of relevant detailed information required. As the Society did not furnish the relevant particulars/clarifications sufficiently in advance and as the scrutiny of the same took some time, the Society did face some financial difficulty. The Society did send some communications to Government indicating financial hardship The delay occurred mainly because the Asiatic Society did not furnish required information in full, in time.

(d) Further releases will be made in accordance with the usual procedure on receipt of complete details from the Society.

Medical equipments lying unused in the Safdarjung Hospital

1263. SHRI KALP NATH RAI :
SHRI SUDHA VIJAY JOSHI :
SHRI HARVENDRA SINGH HANSPAL :

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Governments attention has been drawn to a report which appeared in the Hindustan Times dated September 8, 1987 that some costly medical equipments were lying unused in the Safdarjung Hospital of Delhi, and

(b) if so, what is the reaction of Government in the matter ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (KUMARI SAROJ KHAPARDE) :(a) and (b) The Government is aware of the newspaper report. However, the medical, equipment namely 'electronic lung machine' and 'operation tables' are being utilised ?

Memorandum from employees of ITI

1264 SHRI M A. BABY :
SHRI K MOHANAN :
SHRI SUKOMAL SEN :

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Prime Minister had received a memorandum from the employees of Indian Telephone Industries protesting against the move to import telecom equipments which the Indian telephone industry can produce; and

(b) if so, details of action taken thereon ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) While the Indian Telephone Industries Employees Union, in their memorandum have raised many issues and made various demands, the central theme was the need to set up electronic switching system factories at Bangalore and Rae Bareli for redeployment of as many of the employees as possible who may be rendered surplus as a result of phasing out of the strowger and crosbar production at these factories There was also the demand to stop alleged plans to import 2 lakh lines of switching equipment annually at an estimated cost of Rs. 170 crores per year.

The Government is fully alive to the need for a strategy for redeployment of employees who are likely to be rendered surplus as a result of phasing out of the obsolete electro-mechanical switching system production at Bangalore and Rae Bareli.

The problem of Bangalore is more immediate. Accordingly, the Government has already decided to set up the second electronic switching system factory at Bangalore to produce 500,000 lines a year of exchange equipment against the present production of about 1.5 lakh lines a year of electro-mechanical switching system

Indian Telephone Industries has already been given instructions to proceed to set up the production of one lakh lines a year of electronic rural automatic exchanges (RAX's) of 128 port capacity of D-DOT design They have also been asked to set up production of another one lakh lines a year of 512 port electronic RAX's of C-DOT design as soon as the same has been cleared for production

The question of adopting any other technology for the balance 3 lakh lines would arise only if at the stage of increasing the production capacity difficulties are experienced with the product based on this technology.

The problem at Rae Bareli is not so urgent However, this is also being looked into The Government has also set up a high powered Committee under the Chairmanship of Chairman SAIL to look into the problems of redeployment of staff likely to be rendered surplus due to phasing out of production of obsolete electro-mechanical exchange equipment, and other allied issues

As far as the alleged plans to import 2 lakh lines of exchange equipment per annum is concerned, the Department has no such plans and therefore there is no case for stopping the same.

Medical Research Project on the Bhopal Gas Victims

@1265. SHRI N E. BALARAM :
SHRI SURAJ PRASAD :

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has decided to terminate the medical research project on the Bhopal gas victim prematurely, and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof and what are the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (KUMARI SAROJ KHAPARDE) : (a) and (b) Two projects viz. (i) Thyroid status in M I C affected and unaffected are as of Bhopal a long term assessment and (ii) Clinical and forensic toxicological studies in M I C affected and unaffected are as of Bhopal tailed consideration by experts since no positive findings were found.

Detention of Air India Airbus at Lagos

1266 SHRI J P GOYAL :
SHRIMATI KRISHNA KAUL :
SHRI SOHAN LAL DHUSIYA :
SHRI RAM CHANDRA VIKAL :
SHRI B SATYANARAYAN REDDY :
SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY :
SHRI SURESH KALMADI :
SHRI ANAND SHARMA :
PROF C. LAKSHMANNA :

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that an Air India Airbus was impounded at Lagos in Nigeria in August, 1987 and if so, the reasons therefor;

(b) whether said Air India plane has since been got released; and if so, on what conditions;

(c) the loss suffered by Air India as a result of impounding of the plane and whether Government of India have claimed any compensation from the Nigerian Government,

(d) whether the Government had since enquired into the circumstances in which the contraband heroin was seized from the plane,

(e) whether any person has been penalised for carrying contraband heroin in the plane and if so, the details thereof; and

@Previously Unstarred Question 933, transferred from the 16th November, 1987.